

**Statement by Ms. Tang Xiaoyan, the Chinese Delegate
At the 16th Session of the CSD under the Item of Africa**

May 8, 2008, New York

Mr. Chairman,

The Chinese delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for the report submitted under this item. We associate ourselves with the statement made by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

Development is an urgent issue facing Africa, the continent with the largest concentration of developing countries. In recent years, African countries have, through their united efforts, achieved commendable results in economic and social development. The international community on its part has also increased attention to African development and pushed actively for the implementation of commitments of assistance to Africa. Nevertheless, Africa is still a long way from development. Problems such as the fragility of the peace and security, lack of diversification in economic structure, imbalance in development, onerous debt burden, inadequate financial resources, and backward infrastructure are severely hampering the development of Africa. Realizing MDGs in Africa remains a daunting task.

African development is first of all the job of Africa itself, but the international community should, on the basis of shared responsibility and common development and in the spirit of global development partnership, intensify support for African development and create an enabling external environment for the poverty reduction and development efforts of the African countries. In connection with the themes of the current session, I'd like to put forward the following proposals:

1. When it comes to responding to the challenges posed by globalization, it is clear that because of their weak economic foundation and lack of financial resources and advanced technologies, the African countries and the developing countries in general are the most vulnerable in the face of the wave of economic globalization. Therefore, in setting the relevant rules and policies, the international community should take into account the special situation of these countries, increase the voice and the representation of the African countries to enable them to fully participate in the formulation of economic rules and to provide them with the capability and opportunity to integrate into the world economy so that they can get their fair share of the benefit of globalization and become more prosperous.
2. It is very important for us to discuss agricultural development in Africa at this session, especially considering the current acute problem of food security. Agricultural development in Africa deserves greater attention of the international community. The African countries suffer from weak agricultural production, degradation of soil and ecological environment and frequent occurrence of natural disasters, all of which affect negatively their efforts to achieve food security and poverty reduction. The international community is duty-bound to increase its support for Africa's agricultural development. Specifically, it should help the African countries build infrastructure, improve irrigation, promote the use of improved varieties of crops and chemical fertilizers, and encourage the diversification of crops. It is also necessary to support the African countries to improve land management and provide credit to farmers so as to encourage the latter to engage in long-term investment. In addition, a favorable trade environment must be created to facilitate the access of African agricultural products to the international market and corresponding financial and technical support should be increased towards this end.
3. Trade is essential for the development of Africa. While the participation of African countries has been deepening steadily, the environment for their participation in international trade has not seen any obvious improvement and this is especially true for the LDCs. The Doha Round is in a stalemate, trade protectionism is on the rise, trade frictions are increasing and preferential trade arrangements are being eroded. Confronted with this situation, the international community should work together to establish a fair, equitable and rational international trade system. In the meantime, zero-duty and zero-quota market access for the products of the LDCs should be

- further expanded and technical assistance provided to help the countries in question strengthen trade-related capacity building.
4. Concerning climate change, the African countries are hit the most by the negative effects of climate change due to a lack of effective coping capability resulting from their relatively low level of economic development and weak infrastructure. Like other developing countries, the African countries are under the double pressure of development and emission reduction. Given this situation, the international cooperation in climate change should be carried out within the framework of sustainable development. The international community should stick to the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”, uphold the basic framework established by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, implement the Bali roadmap, carry out international cooperation in the field of climate change in a balanced way, increase financial help and technological transfer to the developing countries and provide assistance to the African countries and the developing countries that suffer from negative effects of climate change.

Mr. Chairman,

While concentrating on its own development, China also attaches importance to international development cooperation. Although China is a developing country itself and faces formidable development challenges, it has been working hard to support the development of Africa within the framework of South-South cooperation with a view to achieving common progress.

China has long provided assistance to the African countries at the best of its capabilities. In recent years, China has vigorously engaged in mutually beneficial cooperation with the African countries in our pursuit of common development. At the 2006 Summit of China-Africa Cooperation Forum, China's President Hu Jintao announced on behalf of the Chinese government eight measures in support of the development of the African countries. Currently, all these measures are being implemented under the joint effort of China and Africa. Measures of increasing development assistance from China to Africa, debt cancellation and tariff exemption are near completion; the foundation has been laid for the African Union Conference Center; the China-African Development Fund was launched successfully; and important progress has been made in helping African countries build hospitals, model centers for agricultural technology and rural schools. The zones of economic

and trade cooperation built by China in countries concerned are under construction. In 2007, China offered training in various fields to more than 3,600 trainees from the African countries. Progress has also been registered in China-Africa cooperation in the areas of finance, science and technology and civil aviation.

China will as always continue to support the African countries to strive for greater achievements.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman